

A U Ω

Why should you inquire if my hunger has been appeased? Hunger and thirst are functions of the body: ask the condition of the mind, then, for man is not affected by the functions nor the faculties. For your three other questions: Where I dwell? Whether I go? Whence I come?, hear this reply. Man, who is the soul, goes everywhere, and penetrates everywhere, like the ether; and is it rational to inquire where it is, or whence or whether thou goest? I am neither coming nor going, nor is my dwelling in any one place; nor art thou, thou; nor are others, others; nor am I, I.—*Vishnu Purana.*

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LO HERE! AND LO THERE!

Occultism is becoming quite the fashion, and mysticism is fast replacing materialism. The credulous and the scoffers often meet face to face. The prophets of the new *régime* send forth oracles from every mole-hill, and the imagination of the ignorant converts the mole-hills into the delectable mountains of truth. As a matter of fact, all this has come about since the founding of the Theosophical Society. Previous to that time, phenomenal spiritualism contended single-handed with materialism and the waning power of the old religions. Such philosophy as existed was of a materialistic type, and consisted in the effort to transfer material existence to the spiritual plane. It is true that, with a higher class of minds, the writings of men like Swedenborg and A. J. Davis had considerable influence, and these had already

become dissatisfied with phenomenism, and had begun to see that all true revelations of spiritual things come from within rather than from without. Since the founding of the T. S., and the appearance of *Isis Unveiled*, all these conditions have changed. Among spiritualists there had been some preparation for the new régime by works like *Art Magic* and *Ghost Land*, and if any had the patience and the hardihood to wade through the writings of P. B. Randolph, they might have discovered amid the ravings of sexual insanity, lucid passages that were indeed food for serious thought. *Isis Unveiled*, that cyclopædia of occultism, entered the arena at this point. The work was the wonder of the curious, the scorn of the phenomenalist, and the ridicule of the materialist. This great work ran rapidly through many editions, and has been read by thousands of curious investigators. It would be a herculean task, indeed, to write a correct history of the past decade, and the changes that have occurred in the spiritual life of the race. A more critical and scientific spirit has entered the camp of the spiritualists, and fraudulent manifestations have frequently been exposed by the spiritualists themselves. These *exposés* have so often occurred that the real value of physical manifestations, even when genuine, has been seriously called in question ; and the result has been an increase in the number of students of the higher philosophy of spirit existence and spirit communion among avowed spiritualists.

Every earnest student of theosophy proper, ought by this time to have learned that little is gained to the cause of truth by either argument or invective, and that nothing is gained by denunciation. To explain, to illustrate, and to unfold a principle of philosophy, or a law of nature, is, however, quite another matter. There is no abomination known to man that has not been proclaimed in the name of the Lord, and marshaled in the cause of truth. The unwary have been thus entrapped, and the ignorant imposed upon. Glimpses of deeper truths and broader philosophies have in later times been derived from the materials at hand, and many persons have in consequence, posed as teachers and prophets. Like satellites, these pseudo-prophets have missed entirely the true orbit, and are prone to erratic curves and tangents. Ambitious of a circle of their own, with satellites to reflect their own borrowed light, these self-intoxicated and self-deluded orbs, have posed as true suns, unmindful of the source of such light as they have derived, and that they must soon become blind leaders of the blind. Making haste to repudiate the source whence their borrowed splendor has been derived, they have thus voluntarily cut themselves off from any renewal or further supply. Mystical mutterings are put forth as true philosophy, under the vain conceit that the less the meaning the more the truth ; and that the more occult a thing is, the less the common sense that is to be derived from it, and the less can it be applied to the uses of com-

mon every day life. These pseudo-prophets imagine that, when they have caught the sounds of a language, they are already familiar with its real meaning and true genius. It is not our present purpose to name either the true or the false, but rather to point out some signs by which they may each be known, everywhere and at all times.

From pure ignorance of the nature of man and of the spiritual history of the human race, one may imagine that he is the first to discover a principle or law in spiritual science or in ethics. He may be ignorant of the fact that the old dreamers and speculators of the Aryan race have traversed the spiritual nature of man, as conquering armies have tramped over the old world. He may never have heard of the Wisdom Religion, or of the Ancient Mysteries, the signs and symbols of which are alike found in the Zodiac, in the figure of *homo* in the latest almanac, and engraved on the oldest monuments of man ; and while he is himself entirely ignorant of the true meaning of these ancient symbols, he may imagine that this archaic and universal language is equally unknown to every one else. It would be but natural, under such circumstances, that one should magnify himself and the value and novelty of his own discovery, and in equal proportion belittle all the rest of mankind ; nor would it be a profitable undertaking for one familiar with the records of antiquity and with the Wisdom Religion to undertake to enlighten such an individual. Such an one is very likely to pose as a prophet, or a high-priest of a new philosophy or a new religion, and in time may gather around him followers even more ignorant than himself. Now two principles will enter into the new oracle ; these are the discovery itself, and the individual proprietorship regarding it. Efforts will be made to promulgate the new doctrine, and coupled with this effort will be the demand that people shall not forget the existence, magnitude, and proprietorship of the prophet. The value of the new oracle turns solely on this personal equation, just as do the discoveries in astronomy. In astronomy the personal equation is accurately calculated and constantly eliminated. In the other case, the personal equation is regarded as of the first importance, and is allowed to remain, is sedulously guarded and magnified till, like the dragon that it is, it swallows all the rest. This personal equation they struggle at all hazards to preserve.

Just here, then, is the test of all new doctrines and new oracles. Nothing so blinds one to truth as egotism, and as a rule it is safe to conclude that, where the egotism is apparent and prominent, the truth is infinitesimal. If the reader will try the great religions and the great discoveries by this test, he will very soon be convinced of its efficacy. One who has really made a great discovery feels overwhelmed and belittled in the presence of the revelation, and he is apt to exclaim, "What am I, O thou All Bountiful, in the presence of thy greatness !" This is, indeed, the

true sign that one has gazed, even though but for an instant, on the light behind the veil of self. The true initiate ever veils his eyes in the presence of the nameless and the ineffable.

Lord Buddha left his kingdom to seek a remedy for the woes of man. John the Baptist received this answer when he asked, Is it He? "He heals the sick, raises the dead, and preaches the gospel to the poor." By these signs may we know them.

One says, "This is *my* doctrine. I made this great discovery, and all others are frauds. I have patented this process and am prepared to protect my rights by law." It is enough! such have saved us even the trouble of investigating their claims, for judgment has already been pronounced from their own mouths. Truth belongs to God and nature, and is the birth-right of man, and she flees the touch of him who would make merchandise of her and barter her for gold, or who would retain her in his selfish embrace. *She is not there.*

It is our privilege, and may be our duty to examine many things, and the thing examined may be measured by itself, and judged by its own standards. The real animus will appear through all disguises, and when it has been the most carefully guarded, and most cunningly concealed, it is then most apparent.

Such things need not be condemned, for they condemn themselves; and it is folly to denounce them, for that only keeps them alive. It is a subterfuge of our own egotism to denounce another, under the plea of protecting the ignorant and innocent from imposture. If the ignorant are attracted to such things, experience is the necessary schoolmaster, and these ignorant ones need just the lesson in discrimination and unselfishness that is in store for them. It is enough for us to place truth in its best light by both precept and example, and thus all who are really in search of the truth will recognize it by kinship with the truth in themselves. Error will thus fall away from truth as the veil from the chiseled marble. Who will look at the veil when once the statue is revealed? People are then looking up and not down.

There is nothing more remarkable about the Theosophic movement than its freedom from controversy. Volumes have, indeed, been written to ridicule and denounce it, and not always because it has been misunderstood. It has been the custom under these circumstances to restate the issues, define again the position of theosophy, and then to go ahead with the work in hand. The founders of the society have been abused and vilified beyond measure, and this abuse has been the most personal and villainous known to the modern secular press. For every argument attempted against the issues raised by Mme. Blavatsky, there has been a volume of personal abuse. She has generally demolished the argument, and passed

the abuse in silent contempt, or with a word of scorn. In this way the adversary has attempted to withdraw public interest from the real issues. The tactics at this point are like those of the school boy who, when unable to contend with his adversary, contented himself with making faces at his rival's sister! All such efforts have signally failed in dislodging the issues raised. The slogan of the T. S. has gone around the globe, "**THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH.**" This motto to-day supplements the religions of the world as Zerubabel supplemented the riddle of Darius the King, and the Almighty Power of Truth is appreciated to-day as it has not been for centuries. But here comes a strange thing. The heroic soul in a sick body, who has thus stood in the breach of the beleagured city, and turned the tide of battle, taking the arrows of hate in her own tortured body, sensitive as only woman can be, proclaiming at every utterance, "I am nothing, but the servant of those Great Souls who have sent me as their messenger"—this sister of humanity has had to face ingratitude and suspicion even from those who have professed themselves Theosophists, and who should have turned with scorn from the vilifications of the common enemy. This has, indeed, been the unkindest cut of all. Some of these seem to have entirely forgotten the source whence they have derived all that they profess to place so high, and have imagined that they could draw off from the main body of workers and still receive the heavenly manna. These have coveted the gift while scorning the hand that bore it. Verily, these are entitled to their mess of pottage, though they are ignorant of the fact that egotism is a plague of darkness, and that the Great Cause of humanity *moves on*. Those who have derived their first and only light from the Theosophical Society, may foolishly imagine that it all originated within themselves. Theo-Sophia is by no means a new thing under the sun. The record made by the society in a single decade will not soon be effaced, and those who have received its blessings and returned them by schismatic efforts which tend to hamper and impede the work must take the consequences of their own acts. The egotism and innate selfishness of such cases are apparent, and cannot long be concealed from any. It is indeed a golden opportunity to help a noble cause in its struggles against overwhelming odds, and every unselfish endeavor in this direction brings sure reward. Individual effort may, indeed, seem insignificant, but if the society works as one man for the elevation of the whole human race, then every worker becomes in truth the whole society, heir to its hard-earned laurels, and to its filial triumphs; for such is the law of harmony under the reign of Universal Brotherhood.

Every inquirer must, indeed, judge for himself, and we have indicated the criterion. We cannot close our eyes to these patent signs, though we may refrain from specific condemnation.

In the absence of any creed, in the absence of all personal claim for infallibility, the leaders of the T. S. have endeavored to set forth the truth for the benefit of man.

The second volume of the *Secret* is *Doctrine* prefaced by this motto : “*My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me,*” and it might be said to all cavillers within, as to all haters without the society : “*If this be egotism, make the most of it !*”

HARIJ.

CULLED FROM ARYAN SCIENCE.

RAIN CLOUDS.

In the Vishnu Purana it is said :

“ During eight months of the year the sun attracts the waters and then pours them upon the earth as rain ;” and,

“ The water which the clouds shed upon the earth is the ambrosia of the living beings, for it gives fertility to the plants which are the support of their existence. By this all vegetables grow and are matured and become the means of maintaining life.”

JUPITER'S SATELLITES.

In the Vishnu Purana Jupiter is named Brihaspati, and is described as having a golden car drawn by eight pale colored horses. This refers to his satellites.

ORIGIN OF PLANET MERCURY.

The Puranas have a legend that the moon was originally in Jupiter's house but was seduced into living with Tara (the present path of the moon), the result of which was the birth of Mercury, meaning that Mercury was withdrawn from its original orbit into its present one nearer the sun.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

This event is brought about, the Puranas state, by the rays of the sun dilating into seven suns which then burn up the world.

THE EARTH'S SPHERICITY.

The earth, situated in the middle of the heavens and composed of the five elements, is spherical in shape. *Aryabhattiyam.*

A hundredth part of the circumference of a circle appears to be a straight line. Our earth is a big sphere, and the portion visible to man being exceedingly small, the earth appears to be flat.

Some fancy that those on the other side of the earth have their heads hanging down. Just as we live here, so do the rest, and feel in no way uneasy.

Those at the north have for their zenith the north, and those at the south, the south, pole; the equator forms the horizon for both, and both find the heavens move from left to right and right to left, respectively. *Goladhyaya.*

THE ATMOSPHERE.

The atmosphere surrounds the earth to the height of 60 miles, and clouds, lightning and the like are all phenomena connected with it. *Ibid.*

POLAR DAYS AND NIGHTS.

For the period when the sun is north it is visible for six months at the north pole and invisible at the south, and *vice versa*. *Ibid.*

PLANETARY LIGHT.

The earth, the planets and the comets all receive their light from the sun, that half towards the sun being always bright, the color varying with the peculiarity of the substance of each. *Laghvaryaabhattiyam.*

CURRENTS IN EARTH AND ITS OCEANS: AND BLOOD CIRCULATION.

Just in the same way as there are arteries for the circulation of blood in the human body, the earth has undercurrents lying one over the other. *Varahasamhita*. [We find now that the gulf-stream is a well defined current in a great body of water, and in the Mediterranean two currents run out and in over one another. On land are many well defined rivers running all their course underground.]

LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME.

(Continued from March.)

VII.

Dear Jasper:

I have your letter, Comrade, in which you say how much you wish there were some Adepts sent to U. S. to help all true students. Yet you know well They do not need to come here in person, in order to help. By going carefully over your letter there appears to be the possibility of the seed of doubt in your heart as to the wise ordering of all things, for all are under the Law, and Masters first of all. Mind, I only say the "*possibility of the seed of doubt.*" For I judge from my own experience. Well do I remember when I thought as you say, how much better 'twould be if some one were there.

If that is allowed to remain it will metamorphose itself into a seed and afterward a plant of doubt. Cast it right out! It does not now show as seed of doubt but it will be a case of metamorphosis, and the change would be so great as to deceive you into thinking it were never from the same root. The best stand to take is that it is all right as it is now, and when the time comes for it to be better it will be so. Meanwhile we have a duty to see that we do all we can *in our own place* as we see best, undisturbed and undismayed by aught.

How much I have in years gone away said and thought those very words of yours and to no profit. Why do you care what becomes of a million human beings? Are not millions going to death daily with no one to tell them of all this? But did you suppose that all this was not provided for? "And heavenly death itself is also well provided for." Now then you and I must learn to look on the deaths or the famishing of millions of beings with unfaltering heart. Else we had better give it all up now. Consider that at this moment are so many persons in various far distant places who cannot ever hear these truths. Do you grieve for them? Do you realize their state? No; you realize only partially the same thing among those with whom it was your present lot to be born—I mean the nation. Do you want to do more than your best? Do you covet the work of another? No; you do not. You will sit calmly where you are then, and with an unaffected heart, picture to yourself the moral and physical deaths and famines which are now without the possibility of prevention or amelioration. Your faith will know that *all* is provided for.

I do not say that you must attain to that calm *now* or give up seeking the Way; but I do say that you must admit that such an attainment must be absolutely tried for. For of such is the trial and why should we care? *We must some day be able to stand any shock*, and to get ready for that time we must be triumphant over some smaller things. Among others is the very position you and I are now in; that is, standing our ground and feeling ourselves so much and so awfully alone. But we know that They have left us a commandment. That we keep, although now and then objects, senses, men and time conspire to show us that Masters laugh at us. It is all a delusion. It is only one consequence of our past karma now burning itself out before our eyes. The whole phantasmagoria is only a picture thrown up against the Screen of Time by the mighty magic of Prakriti (Nature). But you and I are superior to Nature. Why then mind these pictures? Part of that very scene, however, being our own mortal bodies, we can't help the *sensation* derived therefrom through our connection with the body. It is only another form of cold or heat; and what are they? They are vibrations; they are *felt*; they do not really exist in themselves. So we can calmly look on the picture as it passes fragmentarily through

those few square feet contained within the superficial boundaries of our elementary frame. We *must* do so, for it is a copy of the greater, of the universal form. For we otherwise will never be able to understand the greater picture. Now then is there not many a cubic inch of your own body which is entitled to know and to be the Truth in greater measure than now? And yet you grieve for the ignorance of so many other human beings! Grieve on, and I grieve too. Do not imagine that I *am* what is there written. Not so. I am grieving just the same outwardly but inwardly trying what I have just told you. And what a dream all this is. Here I am writing you so seriously and now I see that you know it all quite well and much better than I do.

Yet my dear Jasper, now and then I feel,—not Doubt of Masters who hear any heartbeat in the right direction,—but a terrible Despair of these people. Oh my God! The age is black as hell, hard as iron. It is iron, it is Kali Yuga. Kali is always painted black. Yet Kali Yuga by its very nature, and terrible, swift momentum, permits one to do more with his energies in a shorter time than in any other Yuga. But heavens, what a combat! Demons from all the spheres; waving clouds of smoky Karma; dreadful shapes; stupefying exhalations from every side. Exposed at each turn to new dangers. Imagine a friend walking with you whom you see is in the same road, but all at once he is permeated by these things of death and shows a disposition to obstruct your path, the path of himself. Yes; the gods are asleep for awhile. But noble hearts still walk here, fighting over again the ancient fight. They seek each other, so as to be of mutual help. We will not fail them. To fail would be nothing, but to stop working for Humanity and Brotherhood would be awful. We cannot: we will not. Yet we have not a clear road. No, it is not clear. I am content if I can see the next step in advance only. You seek *The Warrior*. He is here, somewhere. No one can find him for you. You must do that. Still He fights on. No doubt He sees you and tries to make you see Him. Still he fights on and on.

How plainly the lines are drawn, how easily the bands are seen. Some want a certificate, or an uttered pledge, or a secret meeting, or a declaration, but without any of that I see those who—up to this hour—I find are my “companions.” They need no such folly. They are there; they hear and understand the battlecry, they recognize the sign. Now where are the rest? Many have I halted, and spoken the exact words to them, have exposed to them my real heart, and they heard nothing; they thought that heart was something else. I sigh to think how many. Perhaps I overlooked some; perhaps some did not belong to me. There are some who partly understood the words and the sign but they are not sure of themselves; they know that they partake of the nature but are still held back.

Do you not see, Jasper, that your place in the rank is well known? You need no assurances because they are within you. Now what a dreadful letter ; but it is all true.

A student of occultism after a while gets into what we may call a psychic whirl, or a vortex of occultism. At first he is affected by the feelings and influences of those about him. That begins to be pushed off and he passes into the whirl caused by the mighty effort of his Higher Self to make him remember his past lives. Then those past lives affect him. They become like clouds throwing shadows on his path. Now they seem tangible and then fade away, only a cloud. Then they begin to affect his impulse to action in many various ways. To-day he has vague calling longings to do something, and critically regarding himself, he cannot see in this life any cause. It is the bugle note of a past life blown almost in his face. It startles him ; it may throw him down. Then it starts before him, a phantom, or like a person behind you as you look at a mirror, it looks over his shoulder. Although dead and past they yet have a power. He gets too a power and a choice. If all his previous past lives were full of good, then irresistible is the force for his benefit. But all alike marshal up in front and he hastens their coming by his effort. Into this vortex about him others are drawn and their germs for good or ill ripen with activity. This is a phase of the operation of Karmic stamina. The choice is this. These events arrive one after the other and as it were, offer themselves. If he chooses wrong, then hard is the fight. The one chosen attracts old ones like itself perhaps, for all have a life of their own. Do you wonder that sometimes in the case of those who rush unprepared into the "circle of ascetics" and before the ripe moment, insanity sometimes results? But then that insanity is their safety for the next life, or for their return to sanity.

Receive my brotherly assurances, my constant desire to help you. Z.
*

THE MAGIC SCREEN OF TIME.

An old Hindu saying thus runs :

" He who knows that into which Time is resolved, knows all."

Time, in the Sanscrit, is called Kala. He is a destroyer and also a renovator. Yama, the lord of death, although powerful, is not so much so as Kala, for "until the time has come Yama can do nothing." The moments as they fly past before us carrying all things with them in long procession, are the atoms of Time, the sons of Kala. Years roll into centuries, centuries into cycles, and cycles become ages; but Time reigns over them all, for they are only his divisions.

* Note.—The number given in March should be VI and not IV. [ED.]

Ah, for how many centuries have I seen Time, himself invisible, drawing pictures on his magic screen ! When I saw the slimy trail of the serpent in the sacred Island of Destiny I knew not Time, for I thought the coming moment was different from the one I lived in, and both from that gone by. Nor then, either, did I know that that serpent instead of drawing his breath from the eternal ether, lived on the grossest form of matter ; I saw not then how the flashing of the diamond set in the mountain was the eternal radiance of truth itself, but childishly fancied it had a beginning.

The tragedy in the temple, in which I was the victim—struck down by the high priest's axe—, was followed by another, as I found out soon when, freed from my body, I conversed in spirit with my friend the strange monk. He told me that the next day the high priest, upon recovering from the terrible event, went into the temple where my blood still stained the ground. The object of his visit was to gain time to meditate upon new plans for regaining his hold upon the people, which had been weakened by the blackening and disappearance of the mountain diamond. His thoughts dwelt upon the idea of manufacturing a substitute for the beautiful gem, but after remaining for a while plunged in such reveries his eye was attracted by a curious scene. Upon the stand from which he had snatched the axe that let out my life-blood he saw a cloud which seemed to be the end of a stream of vapor, rising up from the floor. Approaching, he perceived that my blood had in some curious way mixed with that which remained of the stains left by the reptile whose death I had accomplished, and from this the vapor arose, depositing itself, or collecting, upon the stand. And there to his amazement, in the center of the cloud, he saw, slowly forming, a brilliant gem whose radiance filled the place.

“ Ah, here ” he cried, “ is the diamond again. I will wait and see it fully restored, and then my triumph is complete. What seemed a murder will become a miracle.”

As he finished the sentence the cloud disappeared, my blood was all taken up, and the flashing of the jewel filled him with joy.

Reaching forth his hand he took it from the stand, and then black horror overspread his face. In vain he strove to move or to drop the gem ; it seemed fastened to his hand ; it grew smaller, and fiery pains shot through his frame. The other priests coming in just then to clear the place, stood fixed upon their steps at the door. The High Priest's face was toward them, and from his body came a flow of red and glittering light that shed fear over their hearts ; nor could they move or speak. This lasted not long —only until the diamond had wholly disappeared from his hand—, and then his frame split into a thousand pieces, while his accursed soul sped wailing through space accompanied by demoniacal shapes. The diamond was an

illusion; it was my blood "crying from the ground," which took its shape from his thoughts and ambitions.

"Come then," said my monk, "come with me to the mountain."

We ascended the mountain in silence, and once at the top, he turned about fixing upon me a piercing gaze, under which I soon felt a sensation as if I was looking at a screen that hid something from my sight. The mountain and the monk disappeared and in their place I saw a city below me, for I was now upon the inner high tower of a very high building. It was an ancient temple dominating a city of magicians. Not far off was a tall and beautiful man: I knew it was my monk, but oh how changed; and near him stood a younger man from whom there seemed to reach out to me a stream of light, soft yet clear, thin yet plainly defined. I knew it was myself. Addressing my monk I said:

"What is this and why?"

"This is the past and the present," he replied; "and thou art the future."

"And he?" pointing to the young man.

"That is thyself."

"How is it that I see this, and what holds it there?"

"'Tis the Magic Screen of Time, that holds it for thee and hides it ever. Look around and above thy head."

Obedying his command, I cast my eyes around the city spread below, and then looking upward I saw at first naught but the sky and the stars. But soon a surface appeared as if in the ether, through it shining still the stars, and then as my gaze grew steadfast the surface grew palpable and the stars went out; yet I knew instinctively that if my thoughts wandered for a moment the sky would once more fill the view. So I remained steady. Then slowly pictures formed upon the surface in the air. The city, its people, with all the color of life; and a subdued hum appeared to float down from above as if the people were living up there. The scene wavered and floated away, and was succeeded by the thoughts and desires of those who lived below. No acts were there, but only lovely pictures formed by thoughts; living rainbows; flashing gems; pellucid crystals—until soon a dark and sinuous line crept through the dazzling view, with here and there black spots and lines. Then I heard the pleasing, penetrating voice of my monk:

"Time's screen rolls on; ambition, desire, jealousy, vanity, are defacing it. It will all soon fade. Watch."

And as I watched, centuries rolled past above me on the screen. Its beauty disappeared. Only a dark background with unpleasing and darker outlines of circumstances that surround contention and greed were offered to my eye. Here and there faint spots and lines of light were visible—the

good deeds and thoughts of those still of spiritual mind. Then a question fell into my mind : "What is this screen ?"

"It will be called the astral light when next you are born on earth," said the voice of my monk.

Just then a mighty sound of marching filled the space. The airy screen seemed to palpitate, its substance, if any it had, was pressed together, as if some oncoming force impinged upon it ; its motion grew tumultuous ; and then the stars once more shone down from the sky, and I hovered in spirit on the dark mountain where the gem had been. No beings were near, but from the distant spaces came a voice that said,

"Listen to the march of the Future."

BRYAN KINNAVAN.

THE SEVEN DWIPAS.

FROM THE INDIAN PURĀNAS.

I.

It is the opinion of many at the present day that the almost grotesque myths, and fantastic geographical and astronomical descriptions contained in the religious writings of many ancient faiths, are not, as they have hitherto been too often considered, mere vagaries and extravagances of the youthful imagination of the early races ; but are really deliberately contrived and constructed allegories, by which ancient sages sought to veil, and effectually succeeded in veiling, the sacred truths which could only be declared in the secret recesses of the temples.

If this be so, then valuable truths and revelations of ancient history of great and absorbing interest may be laid bare, if we succeed in removing the veil from these venerable allegories. To understand them completely, demands doubtless a knowledge not at the command of ordinary students ; but nevertheless, in studying these myths and making ourselves familiar with them, we find a link which binds us by sympathy to a remote past, and to a phase of the human mind which must have its representative in us, ready to vibrate responsive to these old-world stories.

They bring us back to an epoch which knew not the iron which has since entered so deeply into our souls ; when man perhaps saw deeper into the mystery of things ; and the universe reflected itself more clearly in his yet undarkened soul.

These old myths, if they contain transcendental truths known to us, and which we can recognize, will open up to us an almost limitless vista in the souls of the ancient sages who inwove their theories therein, and will give us one more proof of the brotherhood of man, wherever born, and in whatever age.

With these reasons in view, we shall try to make our readers familiar by degrees with the great allegories of India, as they appear in the Brâhma-nas, the Purânas, and the great epics, the Mahâbhârata and the Râmâyana.

In a recent number, we told the tale of the Rajput supremacy, and of the mighty contest between the Brâhman and the Kshattriya, and the rivalry of Vashishta and Visvamitra ; and at present we shall try to give the history of the seven dwîpas, the great divisions of the world in the Purânic cosmogony.

We shall first try merely to reflect faithfully into our pages the picture presented by the Purânas, and afterwards summarise any ideas as to the meaning of the Purânic stories which occur to us.

But there is little doubt that the full import of these stories will not be brought to the light, until they have lain in the minds of mystics for years ; until the time when the facts of nature to which they refer reflect themselves again in the minds of men.

The seven dwîpas, or divisions of the earth, are said in the Vishnu Purâna to have been formed as follows :

Priyavrata distributed the seven dwîpas, into which the earth had been divided (by Nârâyana in the form of Brahmâ) amongst his seven sons ; who are the regents of the seven dwîpas. Before this, Priyavrata, being dissatisfied that only half the earth was illumined at once, by the sun, followed the sun seven times round the earth in his own flaming car of equal velocity, like another celestial orb, resolved to turn night into day ; the ruts made by his chariot-wheels were the seven oceans : in this way the seven dwîpas, or continents were made.

These seven continents are called Jambu dwîpa, Plaksha dwîpa, Shâl-mali dwîpa, Kusha dwîpa, Krauncha dwîpa, Shâka dwîpa, and Pushkara dwîpa.

These continents, which appear to have lain in concentric circles, with Jambu dwîpa in the centre, were separated by annular oceans, said to have been formed of salt water, sugar-cane juice, clarified butter, curds, milk, and fresh water, respectively.

Jambu dwîpa lay in the centre of all these continents. It fell to the lot of Agnîdhara, son of Priyavrata, who again divided it among his nine sons.

In the centre of Jambu dwîpa is the golden mountain Meru, 84,000 yojanas high, and crowned by the great city of Brahmâ.

Then follows a minute description of Jambu dwîpa.

Before referring to it, however, let us try to make clear our conception of the Purânic idea so far.

Let thirteen concentric circles be drawn : the inner is Jambu dwîpa ; the annular space next to it is the salt ocean ; the next annular space is

Plaksha dwipa ; and so on. Outside, we have the sea of fresh water which encircles the whole system.

The subdivision of Jambu dwipa, which is, as we have seen, a circular island, is as follows :

Mount Meru is in the centre.

South of Mount Meru are three mountain ranges ; and north of it are three mountain ranges ; dividing it into seven strips. These strips are the Varshas, or subdivisions, of Jambu dwipa.

The centre strip is divided further into three parts, a western, central, and eastern division ; making in all nine Varshas. Meru is in the centre of this central division of the central strip. This central Varsha is called Hârvita. It is divided from Harivarsha, to the south, by the Nishada range ; and from Ramyaka to the north by the Nila range. To the west of Hârvita, lies the Varsha of Ketumâla ; while to the east lies Bhadrasva.

Harivarsha is, we have seen, the Varsha directly to the south of Hârvita. South of it lies Kimpurusha, separated from Harivarsha by the Hemaketu range. South of Kimpurusha and separated from it by the Himâdri or Himâlaya range, lies Bhârata Varsha.

These three, Harivarsha, Kimpurusha, and Bhâratavarsha, are all to the south of the three central Varshas.

To the north of the three central Varshas lie three other Varshas ; Ramyaka, Hiranmaya, and Uttara Kuru. Ramyaka is, as we have seen, separated from the zone containing the three central Varshas by the Nila range.

North of Ramyaka, and separated from it by the Shveta range, lies Hiranmaya ; while north of this Varsha, and separated from it by the Shringeri range, lies Uttara Kuru.

This will make sufficiently clear the geography of Jambu dwipa ; each division of which was under the rule of one of the nine sons of Agnidhara, the son of Priyavrata.

Bhârata Varsha seems to be identical with what we know as India, bounded on the north, as it is by the Himâdri, or Himâlaya, and on the south reaching to the extremity of Jambu Dwipa, which is surrounded by the ocean of salt water.

A description of the other eight Varshas follows :

In these, Kimpurusha and the rest, it is said that the inhabitants enjoy a natural perfection attended with complete happiness gained without toil. There is there no change, nor age, nor death, nor fear ; no distinction of virtue and vice, and no difference of best, medial, and worst ; nor any change resulting from the four ages (yugas).

Again it is said : In those eight Varshas, there is neither sorrow nor weariness nor anxiety, nor hunger nor fear. The people live in perfect health free from every suffering, for ten or twelve thousand years.

Indra does not rain on these Varshas, for they have many springs. There is no division of the time into the Krita, Treta, and other Yugas.

In the Aitareya Brâhmaṇa it is said of the Uttara Kurus that they are consecrated to glorious dominion ; and the following story is told :

Sâtyaharya declared to Atyarâti a great inauguration similar to Indra's; and in consequence Atyarâti, though not a king, by his knowledge went round the earth on every side to its ends, reducing it to subjection ; Sâtyaharya then said to him " thou hast subdued the earth in all directions to its limits ; exalt me now to greatness."

Atyarâti replied, " When I conquer the Uttara Kurus, oh Brâhmaṇa, thou shalt be king of the earth, and I will be only thy general."

Sâtyaharya replied, " That is the realm of the gods ; no mortal man may make the conquest of it."

The Uttara Kurus are mentioned also in the Râmâyana, as " the abodes of those who have performed works of merit," and again " you must not go to the north of the Kurus : other beings also may not proceed further."

In the Mahâbhârata, Arjuna is thus addressed : " Thou canst not, son of Prithâ, subdue this city. He who shall enter this city must be more than man. Here are the Uttara Kurus, whom no one attempts to assail. And even if thou shouldst enter, thou couldst behold nothing. For no one can perceive anything here with human senses."

And again, in another place, it is said by Kushika, on seeing a magic palace : " I have attained, even in my embodied condition to the heavenly state ; or to the holy northern Kurus, or to Amarâvati, the everlasting city of Indra."

We shall try to point out further what seems to us to be the great value of these texts, when trying to unravel a little of the Purânic mystery.

To make quite certain our identification of the Bhârata Varsha of Jambu Dwipa in this cosmogony with India, we shall quote the following text from the Vishna Purâna :

The country to the north of the ocean, and to the south of the Himâdri, the snowy mountains, is Bhârata Varsha, where the descendants of Bhârata dwell.

As all our readers know, it was between two divisions of the descendants of Bhârata that the Mahâbhârata war was fought.

The following qualities of Bhârata Varsha are noticed :

In Bhârata Varsha, and no where else, do the four Yugas, Krita, Treta, Dvâpara, and Kali exist. Here devotees perform austerities, and priests sacrifice. In this respect Bhârata is the most excellent division of Iambu Dwipa : for this is the land of works, while the others are places of enjoyment.

In the Bhâgavat Purâna, it is said : Of the Varshas, Bhârata alone is

the land of works ; the other eight Varshas are places where the celestials enjoy the remaining rewards of their works.

This is almost all the information we can collect of the Purânic idea of the divisions of Jambu Dwipa. We shall afterwards examine some of these texts, with their bearings ; first glancing at the accounts of the other dwipas.

CHARLES JOHNSTON, F. T. S.

(Concluded in May.)

THE FOURTH DIMENSION.

[A PAPER READ BEFORE THE MALDEN THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY BY FRANK S. COLLINS.]

The subject of four dimensional space hardly seems, at first glance, to have much connection with theosophical doctrines ; except possibly that most persons would regard both as being vaguely mysterious, and many persons would consider both as arrant nonsense ; and I am afraid that if I should claim that there was quite a definite relation between the study of the fourth dimension, and the fundamental principle of the T. S., universal brotherhood, even the members themselves might smile incredulously ; but I hope I shall be able to show that such a relation is not preposterous, but quite natural.

We all know that from the very first records that we have of philosophy, especially of esoteric philosophy, there has been a peculiar and mystical virtue assigned to numbers. "All systems of religious mysticism are based on numerals." *Isis Unveiled* II, 407. Pythagoras said that the essence of things consisted in Number, and that the Kosmos was generated out of numbers.

And this mystical virtue has also been attributed to various geometrical figures. The line, the circle, the triangle, the square, each has been used as a symbol of some great truth ; as well as, on a lower plane, a potent instrument in magical ceremonies. Now geometry is the study of dimensions, surfaces and solids ; and the study of four dimensional space, if such a thing there be, is merely a higher branch of geometry ; and we may perhaps find in it teachings of an order beyond what we can get from a mathematics dealing with space of fewer dimensions.

Of course you will not expect that in the short time I shall use this evening, I can give you much idea of higher space and the laws which work in it ; or perhaps a better expression would be, the forms under which, in higher space, are manifested those universal laws with whose working in our ordinary space we are familiar. To do this would be a long and not very easy task ; I can only hope to show that there is something to study and to

learn, something that will repay the study. And in what I shall say, I am almost entirely indebted to Mr. C. H. Hinton, whose books "Scientific Romances" and "A New Era of Thought" are most fascinating and instructive studies for any one who cares to look within the surface of things.

To begin at the beginning:—a point, mathematically speaking, has location, but no dimensions. When this point is moved in any direction, we have a line, extending from the point of starting to the point of stopping; and we may call this line space of one dimension, that of length. Suppose this whole line to be moved in a direction at right angles to itself, and we have a surface, a square; space of two dimensions, viz:—length and breadth. Let this square move at right angles to itself, that is, at right angles both to the original course of the point to form the line, and to the course of the line in forming the square; we have now a solid body, *i. e.*, space of three dimensions, length, breadth and thickness. Now just as the line moved at right angles to itself and formed the square; just as the square moved at right angles to itself to form the cube; so if the cube can be moved in a direction at right angles to itself, that is, at right angles to each and every line and surface in itself, we shall get—what? We can't say now, but certainly something quite different from a line, a surface, or a solid.

Suppose the length of the line to be two inches; then the area of the square will be $2 \times 2 = 4$ inches, the contents of the cube 4×2 inches = 8 inches. If we represent the first (the line) by the algebraical expression a , the second (the square) will be a^2 , the third (the cube) will be a^3 ; so that these three terms can be graphically represented to us. But in algebra the expression a^4 , that is a^3 multiplied by a , is perfectly proper; how shall we represent that graphically? We cannot; we have to stop at a^3 .

The length of the line is 2 inches, the area of the square is 4 inches, the contents of the cube is 8 inches; but these inches are quite distinct from each other. No possible number of inches composing the line will make up one of the inches composing the square; no possible number of the inches composing the square can make up one of the inches composing the cube. So no conceivable number of the solid units composing the cube representing a^3 , can make up that which we mean by a^4 ; the two are incommensurable. So as soon as we try to go beyond a^3 , we come up against a wall, metaphorically speaking; and why should we not say that there is nothing beyond it?

The only way here is to apply a famous occult motto, what we might almost call a fundamental axiom of occult science; the words from the emerald tablet of Hermes: "As is that which is above, so is that which is below." We cannot directly perceive that which is above, but if we look at that which is below, we may learn from analogy.

Let us suppose beings existing in space of two dimensions ; beings with senses and intelligence, like ourselves, but neither they nor the world in which they exist, having any dimensions but length and breadth ; no such thing as thickness. Or, as such beings would be to us, and to our modes of thought, merely abstractions, let us suppose them to be exceedingly thin in the third dimension, say of no greater thickness than a single molecule of matter. In a work on astronomy or physics, when we wish to show how gravitation holds bodies on the earth, on whichever side of it they may be, we represent the latter by a section of it, a circle, along the circumference of which we place representations of the various bodies on it, which are held firmly to it by the force of gravity, drawing them towards the centre. Now to these beings of the plane world, this circle *is* their earth, not merely a section of it ; they are free to move round it ; by an effort opposing the force of gravity they can move from it, as we can by an effort and by suitable appliances rise from the surface of our earth, as by a ladder or for an instant by jumping.

Looking at the corner of this room, we find three lines proceeding from it at right angles to each other ; two horizontal and one vertical ; now from that corner we can proceed to any point of space in the room by moving on those lines, or lines parallel to them. The plane being, supposing the plane he inhabits to be that of this floor, could reach any point in his space by one or both of the two directions, which proceed from the corner on his plane ; to rise from that plane into what we call space, would be as inconceivable to him as for us to pass to some point not to be reached by either of our three lines or lines parallel to them.

Cut out of paper an equilateral triangle, each side say two inches long ; cut this in two by a line from one angle to the middle of the opposite side ; let the two parts lie on the table without changing their relative position from what it was before the original triangle was divided ; you have now two triangles of the same dimensions, their angles and areas just the same ; but as long as they lie in the same plane you may move them round and round as much as you like, and you can never make them coincide. But if you lift one of them from the surface on which it lies and turn it over, it will then coincide exactly with the other.

Draw a square on a piece of paper ; put a coin on the paper inside the square ; can you slide that coin on the paper in any way so as to bring it outside, without touching the square ? No ; but you can lift it up and set it down outside.

Now in these two apparently, and to us actually simple operations, we have accomplished what to the two-dimensional being is an impossibility, an actual absurdity ; equally impossible and absurd as would be to me to turn round my left hand until it fitted my right glove just as my right hand does ;

or corresponding to the second example of two-dimensional impossibility, the moving of an object in and out of a closed room or box without any opening being made in the walls. To make the two triangles coincide, we lift one out of the plane in which it lies, and turning it over through the third dimension of space, lay it down on the other triangle, and thus accomplish what never could be done as long as we moved it about in the two dimensions. Now just as the triangle exists in space of two dimensions, so my hand exists in space of three dimensions ; the two hands agree in every particular, dimensions the same in every respect, every curve and angle the same ; but no possible way that I can move them will make them coincide. As the plane being would say as to the triangle problem, it is impossible. But as the two dimensional impossibilities are very simple things to us, so to a being existing in higher space, if such a being exist, our impossibilities must be equally simple matters.

(Concluded in May.)

THEOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT AND LITERATURE.

The story in the February Atlantic, to which we have been indebted for a number of admirable occult stories during the past few years, is of quite another flavor from Bellany's "To whom this may come." "The Gift of Fernseed" is by Harry Perry Robinson, a young Englishman who has been living on the Northwest coast for some years ; it is most weird in conception and related with striking realism. It is a tale of the black magic wrought by a malevolent Indian medicine man upon Arthur Sayce, a young physician, in whose name the story is told. Sayce drinks a drug at the hands of the Indian, which has the effect of making him invisible, but retaining all his senses but that of touch. This is accomplished by effecting a kind of disintegration that takes place in every particle of his body, dissolving the coarser physical, and leaving only the finer and invisible particles of the second principle, the vehicle of life. This process is accompanied by the most intense pain, and here the author tallies well with what is related of the transformation effected in the various *yoga* practises, also attended with extreme pain ; only in this story it is effected by artificial means that dissolve the physical elements, while in the former the physical body remains apparently intact, but in reality changed in nature by the discipline to which it has been subjected. Is is also a fine touch that Sayce, while in this enchanted condition, was enabled to make himself manifest to animals and to sleeping persons ; for animals, existing nearer nature than

we, are more susceptible to impalpable influences, and these have the guidance of instinct, while in our sleep we return to Nature ourselves, and are then unconsciously upon the same plane upon which Sayce consciously found himself. From what we are told of suicides and others who are prematurely torn from their bodies by violent death it seems as if theirs must be a similar state to that here described, until they are released by the "second death." It is a shudderingly powerful tale and the reader is made to sympathize keenly with the Indian wizard's victim, in the keen mental tortures of his condition." The sorcery of the tale has a bright relief in the figure of Father Francis, the unselfish and saintly mission priest.

Many a Theosophical student has doubtless felt the relationship inherent between their faith and the higher socialistic ideas, for the latter are based upon Universal Brotherhood also ; showing the evils of Individualism, the essential selfishness of competition in business, and the sense that only by working for the good of the whole can the true welfare of the individual be promoted. The philosophical Socialists write like intuitive Theosophists. For instance, these words by Laurence Gronland in the chapter on morals in his "Co-operative Commonwealth." : "The religion of the future, besides, will lay special stress on our *interdependence* ; it will teach men that the only way in which they can enter into vital relations with the Great Mystery is through *Humanity* ; Socialism, in other words, will elevate religion from being a narrow personal concern between the individual and his maker into a *social concern between Humanity and its Destiny*. Humanity will not become a *god*, as Comte would have it, but *the mediator between man and the Mystery*. When at some time you are lying sleepless in bed in the solemn hours of the night, do what I often have done : project yourself into space and fancy the insignificant little planet which is our dwelling place rolling swiftly past you, swarming with its ant-colonies of kings and beggars, capitalists and workers, all in the hollow of the hand of that Great Mystery ! Is not that a train of thought that should make manifest to us the "solidarity," the interdependence of mankind ? What is more natural than that each of us should desire and try to help our species along on the road to its destiny, since the ability has mercifully been granted us to coöperate with that Will of the Universe which our own nature suggests to us?"

In his "Ça Ira ! or Danton in the French Revolution," Gronland rises to still loftier heights, and his view of the shaping of the course of events by the intelligent will of "the Power behind Evolution" constitutes the basic thought of the work, like the motive of a grand symphony.

A WORD ON PRONOUNS.

It is claimed that civilization cannot alter the nature of the savage. If there be any withdrawal of the restraining influences of civilization, his tendency is inevitably "back to the blanket," and to snake-worship, or whatever form of worship his ancestors may have been given to. This desire to fall down and worship something, or somebody, appears to be one of the proclivities of the human mind not to be eradicated,—not in this age, at least. It was born in the blood, and does not seem to have been civilized out of it, whether the blood be black or white. Carlyle calls it "hero-worship."

These reflections were started by seeing the personal pronouns of the Himalayan Brothers printed with "caps," as the printers say. As, in their case, the name "Brothers" has become a proper name, it may legitimately be capitalized to distinguish it from the name of any, or all other, brothers; but why capitalize their pronouns? Those referring to Christ are usually printed with caps, but it would seem much better to omit them. Can a capital letter add to his glory, or the absence of it detract therefrom? Neither does it add to that of the Himalayan Brothers. The only thing it does do is, in some sort of fashion, to gratify the craving of the human heart to worship in some way, even if it be only the weak sort of adoration expressed through an enlarged letter. These Brothers themselves, if they are what they are represented, would, I fancy, look upon these capitalized pronouns (if their attention were called to them at all) with a smile of pity for this desire to worship and adore. They, of all others, would not wish this empty honor. The higher one rises in the scale of life, the farther the desire for worship and empty honors recedes from him or her. Let us honor all true worth and nobility of character, but never "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee" to any. The Brothers on the Asiatic mountains are simply human like the rest of us, for have we not all within us the promise and the potency of that higher life which awaits but our self-sacrificing efforts to develop it? While we all have the germs of adepthood within us, but few have the character to lead a life that shall bring it out. And so we may justly honor those who do succeed, but the silly worship of the past let us strive to outgrow.

FRANCES ELLEN BURR.

NOTE. We have printed the above because the subject has been referred to before by us, and we think the ideas expressed are of some importance—to students, but not to the "Brothers" spoken of by the writer. We distinctly disagree with Miss Burr when she describes the capitalizing in PATH or elsewhere of the pronouns used for the "Brothers" as "hero-worship," and also with her

suggestion that the use of such capitals shall be dispensed with. Her article has not been thus *disfigured*, since she herself omitted the caps. Nor can we agree that the Adepts referred to are, as she says, "simply human like the rest of us," for that statement is too Americanly independent for us to adopt it, and also somewhat wide of the mark.

True independence we believe in, but not in that sort which, merely from the influence of ideas of political freedom based on theoretical equality, causes a man to place himself on such an equal footing with others that he will not accord to beings infinitely beyond him in degree the highest marks of respect.

Sages do not concern themselves with small questions of etiquette or address, but that should not prevent us when we write to each other of those sages from capitalizing the pronouns used. Every one is at liberty to do this if he pleases, or to refrain; and we have no blame to attach. But the Adepts, while human, are not "simply like the rest of us." The highest divine being is truly a human ego in perfection, but the difference between the state of such an ego and these lower unperfected human gods is beyond our power to measure. And the difference is so great that the writer's second last sentence should be altered to read that, "while a few amongst tens of *thousands* have the power to strive for Adeptship, hardly one in all those thousands is able to comprehend the Mahatma as He is." [ED.]

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS.

From Mrs. E. K.

"When, as Z writes, one has an idea which internally he thoroughly understands, and another seems to find fitting expression for that idea, would it not show how universal Truth is, and would it not also serve to lessen any feeling of separateness?"

Answer—You are right. We ought to study Life for just such testimony. It comes, from all directions, to the thoughtful seeker. It is the inner meaning, for which we are to ceaselessly look. It is always there. Sometimes we should blindly pass it by if the remembered thought of another did not flash into our minds and illuminate the circumstance for us. You may see why it is valuable to frequent the society of persons who earnestly seek Truth, or to read the works given to us by those who have some knowledge of it. Also to be in a Society (working for it and receiving through it) through which such teachings are given out. These things prepare the soil for the seed. They help us, by their light, to recognize Truth when we find it for ourselves.

Question 2. "As there can be but one mind, why does Z. speak of subconscious mind?"

Answer. There is but one universal mind. It is differentiated in human beings of the average order, and in them becomes dual also—the higher and lower mind. In them it is more or less vitiated by Desire. By

“subconscious mind” Z. meant the higher spiritual mind, which is very near to the universal mind, but which is still a differentiation of that, in a person with a “sense of separateness.” In such a person it is subconscious. When man broadens to the universal—a condition only understood by Adepts who *are* themselves that condition—this higher mind in its original purity, is a state of Being and not an “internal” organ.

JASPER NIEMAND.

From B. Q.

The name “Koothoomi” has been so jeered at as an invention, that I would ask if you can refer me to any authority mentioning it before Mr. Sinnett?

Answer—On p. 355 of *Classical Dictionary of India* by John Garrett, published in 1871 by Higginbotham & Co. of Madras, under KUTHUMI, you will find: “A pupil of Panshyinji and teacher of the *Sama Veda*.”

SUGGESTIONS FOR BRANCH T. S. WORK.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS RELATIVE HERETO CAN BE SENT CARE OF “PATH.”

I.

The work of Branches of the Theosophical Society divides itself into two classes:—

- (a.) That done by the Branch at its meetings;
- (b.) Activity of the Branch outside of its meetings.

As yet there seems to be but little activity of the second class in the United States, while the opportunities for it are numerous.

In India many Branches have established Sanscrit schools, and others have opened free dispensaries. Of the latter the one at Bombay is a notable example. In this country the present great need is for Sunday Schools where children shall be taught theosophical doctrine. There is no necessity for Sanscrit schools, but that the children of theosophists should have to go to Sectarian Sunday schools, where ideas will be crammed into them that cannot be gotten rid of in half a life time, is an injustice to the children and a blot on theosophical work. The pertinent question arises: Why is it that theosophists think so much of our doctrines and yet keep them away from their children? Is it because they think the latter cannot understand, or because public opinion is against it, or because of laziness? Let each reply to himself.

AS TO THE BRANCH WORK IN ITSELF.

Regular meetings should be held, say as often as once a week. Members should all strive to contribute their ideas, either in writing or extemporaneously, *upon theosophical doctrines*.

This Society is one which seeks truth, and not one which forces upon members any ideas whatsoever. Hence should be avoided the error, sometimes encountered, of

Sitting still, waiting for valuable pieces of information to be communicated to those who have entered the body.

LIBRARIES.—Each Branch should start a library. The poorest one can do this. If the treasury cannot afford funds for books, the members can contribute theosophical works for a nucleus. Upon the nucleus will grow an adequate library. If possible, where inquirers are known and have no books they should be allowed to use the library at stated times.

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE.—There is now a sufficient body of literature to meet all present needs. Some of it is cheap, some dear. The *PATH* can supply some cheap books. *The Wilkesbarre Letters on Theosophy* are a succinct statement, comprehensible by everybody, of what Theosophy is; *Light on the Path* is suitable for devotional minds; *Bhagavad Gita* should be read by everybody; *Theosophical Pub. Soc.* prints valuable matter.; and so on in every direction. Each Branch should distribute such publications in its own district.

OPEN MEETINGS.—No Branch should exclude visitors or inquirers, but such theosophical and interesting discussions and papers as would invite attendance, ought to be the rule. It is contrary to the spirit of this movement to make it exclusive. It is for all people, and, if in a Branch a nucleus of members well read and informed upon theosophical doctrines, is formed, there can be no fear that inquirers will overrun the meetings.

To that end, therefore, definite subjects ought to be taken up for thought and discussion. These, if pursued continuously until all present are fully acquainted with them, will in a short time create the desired nucleus.

TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION AND THOUGHT FOR APRIL.

A Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.

This is the Society's first, fundamental and only doctrine.

The T. S. was organized for the purpose of creating a nucleus of such a brotherhood. [See first papers of the T. S., and all its magazines]

Observe, a *nucleus* is to be formed. It is not thought that the final realization of a universal brotherhood is possible in this age.

A Nucleus is the central part of a body around which matter is collected. If the effort to form this nucleus is not made, there will be no hope for the future. But if the *nucleus* is formed now, the progress of the cycles will show its growth.

Reincarnation is connected with this idea. For, all those who now

work to this end will, in coming cycles, go on with the same efforts. The people of to-day will not remain a century ; but ideas are eternal, and once this idea of Universal Brotherhood is broadly sown, around the nucleus formed by the Society other souls in other lives will collect and make its universality possible.

Universal Brotherhood is a law and not a vague unattainable. Metaphysically expressed it is, "Spiritual identity." All human beings are spirits. Each spirit is chained to a body ; but the spirit has its eternal and incessant interchange, interaction, interrelation and communion with all spirit. Even the body to which it is chained is, in a way, connected with the ocean of spirit ; for any atom of the body is only a grosser part of the spiritual plane. [See *Bhagavad-Gita*, that there is no particle of matter—prakriti—without spirit—purusha—being always present.] Spirit is called, in A. P. Sinnett's book *Esoteric Buddhism*, the 7th principle. This is merely a convenient classification, because in fact, spirit is the underlying and interpenetrating principle—the only reality—the other principles are merely illusionary appearances that are impermanent. If man is a spirit, then, through the universal diffusion of spirit, he must affect all other beings by his acts and thoughts.

The effort to form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood should begin with each member.

In this respect : the atoms of the body, and all the different departments of the nature of each person, are intended for component parts of the Universal Brotherhood which each man should be in himself. There should be a harmony and adjustment among these, in order that the man may, in turn, be a fit unit in the larger brotherhood. Between the members of a Branch or group the same harmony should prevail. This can only be brought about by toleration and an absence of self-assertion, and by the members giving continued thought to one theosophical subject at a time, during several meetings; they then all become attuned to each other.

In order to see the bearings of this subject, theosophical literature should be read, such as : *Esoteric Buddhism*, *Five Years of Theosophy*, *The Purpose of Theosophy*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *Light on the Path*, *Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and other works.

QUOTATION FROM THE "SECRET DOCTRINE."

"The next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life-cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may now yet be imprisoned, semi-conscious, in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom while their lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the vegetable world."

PARTIAL REFERENCES.

Karma, Path, Vol. 1, p. 175; and *Providence*, Vol. 3, p. 215; *Lessons of*, Vol. 2, p. 325; *Reincarnation and Spirits*, Vol. 1, pp. 232, 320, 184; *R. of Mahatmas*, Vol. 2, p. 114; *Poetry of R.*, Vol. 2, pp. 102, 133, 168, 193, 230; *Western Study of R.*, Vol. 2, p. 33; *Heredity*, Vol. 3, p. 256; *Reincarnation*, Vol. 3, pp. 23, 163; *Pride of Possession*, Vol. 2, p. 372; *Epitome of Theosophy*, Vol. 2, p. 320.

G. Hijo.

TEA TABLE TALK.

There is no point upon which students of occultism find themselves in so great difficulty as upon that of concentration.

We are briefly told in the *Secret Doctrine* that the activity of our physiological senses prevents us from entering the realms of the unseen. The proper methods of attaining concentration then demand our attention. We try to attain the fixed mental attitude, and constant failure results. We go in search of the cause of failure, and pursue it from one point to another, only to find that each is a deeper result, not a cause. We are in need of a clearer understanding of our subject; at once of why we cannot concentrate our thoughts, and in what concentration consists. Patanjali might help us, but is hard to comprehend. Help may be had in part from Ribot's *Diseases of the Will*, which exists in English. A recent article in *Scribner* for March, entitled, "Economy in Intellectual Work," although written from the point of view of modern psychology, contains various propositions likely to be useful in clearing up the subject to Western minds. We call attention to the article as corroborating much taught by Eastern Science, without understanding the basic facts of the subject, as Eastern Science alone does. These propositions are:

1. That concentration of thought conduces to the economy which alone prevents nervous waste and disease. (As is well known, the circulation of the nervous fluid and phenomena, have only been ascertained by the Eastern Scientist or Adepts.)
2. That economy demands conformity to the laws of our unconscious cerebral processes. One important law of our unconscious processes is that of rhythm, traceable in all manifestations of life. (A purely occult doctrine this. The rhythm is due to the regular expansion and contraction of the Astral Light.) The attention seems to ebb and flow in rhythmic oscillation. If we have a regular hour for study or for work upon any particular subject, soon at that hour the Unconscious favors us. It is largely in one's power to establish a good rhythm by regularity in one's activity.
3. That the presence of unessential ideas in consciousness causes loss of energy. We know nothing of these unessential ideas till we are conscious of them, when the mischief is done. Their cause is an unstable condition of the attention. There are two kinds of attention; voluntary and spontaneous.

Horwicz, Ribot and others show that both forms of attention depend upon the feelings or emotions ; that spontaneous attention is the basis of all attention and is dependent upon emotion. Patanjali suggests that meditation upon an object or person approved of aids in steadyng the mind. Another eastern teaching puts it still more pithily : "The Way lies through the heart." All physical and mental processes tend to spontaneity in their perfection, and drop one by one, all unnecessary processes, just as Nature does when, having once perfected an object, she tends thereafter to make it more quickly. It has been observed that a child, learning to write, screws up the mouth, the shoulders, and even moves the muscles of the feet. When he has once learned, the act is unconsciously accomplished with far less effort ; this is a fair example of the tendency of all things towards spontaneous or unconscious procedure. For the unification of those energies which are the soul's forces, concentration at fixed hours upon a subject really loved, is shown to be a logical and a natural necessity.

4. That all our activity is the result of emotional impulse and a tendency to rigid economy is a law of the spontaneous activity of the nervous system. Hence, the more one can work *with nature*, the more sure one can be to avoid waste. (Contemplation is well defined as "the inexpressible yearning of the Inner man to go out towards the Infinite." It is the cultivation of this yearning and of universal love which creates that spontaneous devotion under which every cell of our body tends to fly to the Divine Thought when released from the temporary digressions of outer life, and this leads to that concentration which achieves Truth, and not to that which is the violent fixation of the inner senses upon a wall, or a pin or what not.)

5. That a large part of education consists in developing the emotions, which can be *rendered stable* by regular and repeated attempts to turn the attention to any particular subject, and that in time this effort converts even drudgery to pleasure. (Here is a hint for students who frankly admit that they find themselves cold to Humanity. They are simply ignorant of their own inner nature, at whose very basis, *Light on the Path* tells us, we shall find Faith, Hope, and Love. These persistent attempts draw our finer elements out from their source, and, as Professor Coues puts it in his finished little poem in Lippincott for March—

"Then, when the fight is done,—then, when the field is won,
Knowst thou thyself.
Let the loud paeans roll, on through the gladdened soul.
That, beyond fear or doubt, thrills with the inward shout,
"Victory! Victory!
Conquest of self!"

6. That "the great danger from an evil thought is not so much the loss of energy for the moment, as the modification of the nerve centre that counts the sin and will use it against us in the next hour of temptation." (This is pure occultism, and requires no further comment.)

7. That in spite of the apparently reckless waste we see in nature, there is a counter principle of rigid economy. This law of parsimony is especially seen in the mechanism of the nervous system in man. Even our scientific theories and philosophic systems may be looked upon as economic devices to enable us to unify the manifold phenomena of nature, and to remove doubt and perplexity before the mysterious facts of existence.

There are many other propositions, less pertinent to our subject, in this excellent article, whose whole tendency recalls the teachings of Bhagavad-Gita. The value of such contemporaneous testimony is, of course, only relative. So long as the existence of elementals, and their life and being within as without our bodies, is ignored, so long the real bearing of all phenomena will remain unknown.

Mr. H., a close and original thinker, says that the oriental ideas cannot reach us as yet in their purity. The western mind has to modify them

to some likeness of its own tendencies, and this modification constitutes a tax on ideas. Free trade in thought will only become possible when *universality* has done its broadening and deepening work upon western peoples. The tendency to unification, observable in all nature, as *underlying* the tendency to differentiation, and constituting the *lex parsimoniae* behind nature's lavishness, begins also to be seen in the co-operative leanings of our time. In art, in trade, in literature, in religion it is gaining ground. And the proportionate value of articles like the above is, that they confirm our perception of this tendency towards unity, towards the occult, and towards eastern lines of thought. If our faith in our own judgment and choice should waver, we find it strengthened by the unconscious attestations of others to the reality of the Evolution of Thought. This alone makes progress possible.

It is singular how many students look upon elementals as necessarily foreign outside enemies to be fought, whereas many of them, as before said, live within us and form part of the elements of which our bodies are composed. We are too apt to look upon our bodies as a homogeneous whole. Even a small dose of the *Secret Doctrine* will correct this mistake. These elementals are to be purified, not killed. Without them, man's power over nature would be shorn. Power over them is power over nature. We obtain it, in first instance, by so purifying the nature from self, that there is no war among our elements, but all come under the control of the conscious soul. We have before pointed out that these elementals are energetic centres in the Astral Light, and of a number of such centres, forms, like our own bodies, are composed.

Apropos of Ribot's book above mentioned, an experience of Mrs. —— is interesting. Rummaging one day in an old garret, she came across the work. Her life was at the time all purely social and very gay; she never read either occult or "scientific" literature. Yet, urged by a strong impulse, she took and kept this tattered paper volume. In many a flight from sea to country, from continent to continent, from house to house, she was continually coming across it and tempted to cast it aside as useless lumber. Somehow, she never could. In time the theosophical current caught her. She became a close student. Her health failing, she found concentration most difficult, even impossible—for the time. She began to study, in herself, the causes of this want of attention, but unsuccessfully, until one idle rainy day last week, she "chanced" (as we so often say) to flutter open a magazine at the article I have quoted here at length. That reminded her of the long forgotten Ribot, and extracting it from its dusty corner, she found, in his chapter on attention *et seq.* the help she required. It is noteworthy that in her present situation, it would have been long before she could have obtained the English translation of the book, had it not been already in her possession, to tide her over a mental crisis. There appears to be much wisdom in the saying of our grand-mothers, to wit; that we shall keep an object seven years; turn it once, and keep it for seven more, when it will be in fashion. All the old popular saws are based on occult truths.

A most graceful incident reaches the Tea Table; a bit of the experience of one who is described as "a very pleasing woman and a powerful psychometer." She had not been well, was in a state of nervous tension, and felt uneasy as to her mental state. One day, while sitting in a rocking chair upon a newly bought Persian rug, she heard faint sounds of music, which gradually grouped themselves into a definite and clearly distinguishable song. There was no person or place from which this could have come, and the suspicion arose that it was a mental hallucination, and she herself seriously unbalanced. The same thing occurred the next day, when she confided her uneasiness to an intimate friend, who had called. Her friend examined the room, looked at the chair, and then noticed the rug. "This is Persian," she said, and made herself sure by examining it. Then she said: "I can explain the

whole thing to you. This is a genuine Persian rug and the sounds come from it. In that country everything is done by hand. The weaver sits cross legged on the floor, his piles of colored wools around him, and an assistant to hand him the colors desired. As he works, he solaces himself by continual singing, but he does not interrupt either the song or the work by a word or a gesture to the assistant; he indicates the colors desired by a certain note, appropriate to each.¹ As the song goes on, and the voice rises or falls from time to time, the assistant understands what color is needed and at once hands it to the weaver. The song has become embedded, fused into the very structure of the slowly formed rug, and is now exuding with sufficient force for your psychometric perception." And this seemed the only explanation. Of course no ear but the extremely delicate one of a psychometer, who was then in a morbidly sensitive state, could detect vibrations from so fleecy a fabric as a rug."

Our correspondent knows of course, that it was her inner ear or psychic sense which detected sounds unheard except by trained occultists. The charming incident makes me wonder how it would be if we wove a song into all our work—a song either of the lips or of the heart—to reach to distant climes and solace the hearts of men? How often our dark, sad thoughts must impinge upon other overburdened lives, to weigh them down still more. We never know where the poisoned arrow of our own life may not reach our brother. Let us send out naught but songs instead of sorrows.

JULIUS.

LITERARY NOTES.

"THE INNER HOUSE," by Walter Besant, is an amusing book whose foundation idea is the scientific discovery of a means of prolonging life forever. At first the discovery delighted the world; then came its inconveniences, which arose apparently from the fact put as follows by President Lincoln, viz.: "You cannot repeal human nature." Without intending it, perhaps, the author presents us with a forcible moral in the failure of physical immortality to elevate and content mankind, unaccompanied, as it were, by any discovery or any action tending to transform the human nature into its divine apotheosis. Men rested upon the physiological discovery and life became a burden.

A STUDY OF MAN, by Dr. J. D. Buck. (*Robt. Clarke & Co, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1889.*) This book, by a member of the Theosophical Society, should be read by theosophists and be in the libraries of Branch Societies. It is the result of many years of experience and thought, and by a man who looks at life and its problems from a scientist's standpoint, but also from that of one who sees that the only reality is the Spirit. It is valuable to the ordinary reader because it is written in the language used by all and not in the mystical way so usual with theosophic writers. The analysis of man from a physiological and anatomical standpoint and the acceptance of the theory of evolution as applied to man, lead logically to the author's view of the spiritual human evolution running parallel on a higher plane. This carries out, in the case of man, the equilibrium which is everywhere found in nature. This theory of evolution and involution, eternally proceeding is the key to the whole work. Among other things he says: "The cosmic form in which all things are created, and in which all things exist, is a universal duality. Involution and evolution express the two-fold process of the one law of development, corresponding to the two planes of being, the subjective and the objective. Consciousness is the central fact of being. Experience is the only

¹ Students of * * * * may see some point to this fact.

method of knowing ; therefore to know is to become. The modulus of nature, that is, the pattern after which she everywhere builds, and the method to which she continually conforms, is an Ideal or Archetypal man. Two natures meet on the human plane and are focalized in man. These are the animal ego and the higher self ; the one an inheritance from lower life, the other an overshadowing from the next higher plane. The discoveries of physical science already impinge so closely on the borders of the unseen universe, as to reveal glimpses beyond the realm of the ordinary senses. The expansion of this centre (consciousness) is understanding ; the illumination of it is conscience, and the harmonious adjustment of God and nature in us is at-one-ment."

THE T. P. S. FUND has reached the sum of \$122.00. Of this \$15 were contributed by and through the T. S. Branches, and \$107 by a few unattached theosophists and by the public at large.

GEOMANCY, by Dr. Franz Hartmann, has been received from the *Theosophical Publishing Company* of London. It has just appeared ; is well printed on good paper and nicely bound. We have not had time to review it.

NOTICE.

PATANJALI'S YOGA APHORISMS.

We wish to draw the attention of students interested in oriental thought, to the edition of Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms which the PATH will shortly issue. It is an interpretation by William Q. Judge, and not a new translation, and puts the Aphorisms in such a way that the irritation and distress which supervened upon reading the Bombay Edition, disappear. There are no sanscrit types. It will also have a preface, and an appendix containing the original text of the Bombay Edition.

The profits, if any, from the sale of this book will be devoted to further theosophical publications.

Price, postage free, \$1.25.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

AMERICAN SECTION T. S.

To Fellows of the Theosophical Society in the Americas.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, ADYAR, January 7th, 1889.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the General Council, I hereby extend, until further orders, the jurisdiction of the American Section, so as to include all Branches, existing, and to be formed, and all unattached Fellows of the Society, in the continents of North and South America, and in the West Indies.

The General Secretary of the American Section, as representative of the President, will communicate this notification to the parties concerned.

[sd.]

H. S. OLcott,

President of the Theosophical Society.

Attest.

T. VIJIARAGHAVA CHARLU,

Recording Secretary of the Theosophical Society.

NEW BRANCHES.—A new Branch is being organized in Brooklyn, N. Y., where there are many inquirers and students. We expect to have full details in May.

From the Pacific coast news comes that a new Branch will soon be started in San José.

ARYAN T. S., N. Y.—The meetings for several weeks have been devoted to the study and discussion of concentration, with beneficial results. At nearly every meeting there are some 60 to 80 people present. Several interesting notes of experiments in concentration have been gathered together, and it is contemplated to issue in pamphlet form all the papers read during this series of meetings.

APRIL CONVENTION.—We repeat the notice that the annual Convention will be held on 28 April at Chicago, in the Palmer House. A large meeting is expected.

CHANGE IN RULES IN INDIA.—A notice of the coming convention was sent to each member-at-large in the United States, and they were asked to express their opinion as to the proposition made at Adyar to do away with dues and fees. Several replies have been received by the General Secretary, all but one being opposed to such a radical change as yet.

EUROPE.

THE DUBLIN LODGE is very active. Frequent meetings are held, some being open to the public. In consequence, the Society grows. The Lodge has started a small Journal, the first number of which is before us, and contains interesting matter. The result of section work among the members has been very encouraging, and our dear Irish brothers write that they are spurred on to renewed and constant work for the cause.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY. Some of these have been received by the PATH to be sold for benefit of the T. P. S. fund. There are two sizes, one cabinet, the other 8x10. They are splendid likenesses. The smaller costs \$1.50 and has the signature of H. P. B. attached; the price of the larger is \$2.00.

ASIA.

COL. H. S. OLCOTT writes from Kyoto to the Editor of PATH saying that his work there has begun splendidly. He has addressed an audience of 2,000 Japanese of all sects of Buddhism and was received with thrilling applause. He is lodged in a temple where no white man was ever permitted to sleep; and was asked to perform the ceremony of administering the *Silas* in the temple. Preparations are being made to receive him in other towns. Kyoto is the spiritual capital of Japanese Buddhism, and there are situated the headquarters of all the twelve sects. He expects to induce the chief priests to form an Advisory Board in aid of the laymen who are to form into T. S. Branches for the purpose of reviving and purifying Buddhism. This is a grand work, and it has been justly said of Col. Olcott by the Asiatics, that he is "a reformer of religions."

Years roll into centuries, centuries into cycles, and cycles become ages; but Time reigns over them all, for they are only His divisions.

OM.